Ex-model accuses Jeffrey Epstein's friend of rape

BY ELAINE COBBE
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Paris – French investigators are looking into possible links between the allegations of sex crimes by Jeffrey Epstein and his former associate and friend, Jean-Luc Brunel, a model agent. The Paris prosecutor opened the case in September, a few weeks after Epstein's suicide, and police searched Epstein's luxury apartment in Paris last month.

Earlier this week, a Frenchwoman in her 20s filed a legal complaint accusing Brunel of sexual harassment. Police say they will soon question her.

Several women have come forward in recent weeks with allegations of sexual assaults by Brunel spanning three decades. CBS News reached out to Brunel for comment but has not heard back.

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Many of the women who have come forward to complain about Brunel worked for his Karin Models agency, but not all of them. A former model who worked with another agency said the Frenchman spiked her drink and raped her more than 30 years ago.

Earlier this month, she made a sworn statement to French police detailing the alleged assault. Due to the French statute of limitations, no criminal case could be filed.

The Canadian former model does not want to reveal her identity, but she agreed to speak to CBS News about what she says happened in 1987, when she was 26 years old and Brunel was in his early 40s.

She said she was out clubbing with friends and Brunel was at the next table. He started talking to her, trying to encourage her to change agencies, but she told him she was happy where she was.

At one point during the night, she said Brunel asked her to accompany him to his apartment to pick something up. She said he had always seemed nice and she did not think anything of it, so she went. Once at his home, she said he asked her if she wanted

a drink.

"And then I don't remember anything. He had drugged my drink," she said. "The next thing I remember is waking up in his bed. He was beside me, and he was sleeping, and naked, and I was wondering how I got there."

"I remember sliding out of the bed and doing everything to just not wake him up. I felt like it took me five minutes just to slide out of the bed. And then I crawled around on the floor and found my clothes and found my shoes and got out of the bedroom, went into the living room and got dressed."

But she says she couldn't find the door out of the apartment. She did find the telephone, and called her friend Rafic, who she asked to come and get her.

She told him: "I can't find the door, but I found the window... I'll jump from the window

and you catch me." She knew the apartment was four floors up, but she said she couldn't think clearly and just wanted to get out. "Luckily he (Rafic) was there to calm me down, because I would have jumped," she said, horrified at the memory.

The woman, who still lives in Paris, said she doesn't remember exactly what happened after she had the drink. "But I did tell my friend everything from the beginning to the end. I told him right away everything," she said. "Later he told me that I had felt Jean-Luc on me, that I had a flash – I must have come to at one point, because I had actually felt him on me."

She said she remembered feeling sore when she woke up, and immediately understood what had happened: "I know I was raped. I know that."

Her friend Rafic, with whom she is still in regular contact, remembers the night vividly.

"She was afraid, panicked," he told CBS News. "She was white, you know, like not even pale, she was white, and she had this expression which tells you everything. She was in total dire straits. I will never forget. It's been a while, but you never forget the expression on your friend's face when something like that happens."

The young woman didn't go to the police at the time. "Number one, I didn't speak French," she explained. "And I think it's already difficult to talk about something like that in your own language. I couldn't even imagine trying to speak to a police officer, probably a man, about what happened to me, and trying to explain it to him in what little French I was capable of speaking. So no, I didn't go to the police. I just wanted to forget everything."

But when she learned this summer that Brunel had been mentioned in connection with the Epstein investigation, it all came flooding back.

"That's when I said to myself, 'I have to do something. I have to, because he can't keep getting away with this.' I had no idea that he was still doing the same thing. We're in 2019, it happened to me in 1987, he's been doing this for how many years?"

She got in touch with one of the other women who had come forward and approached her lawyer to give her own sworn statement detailing the alleged assault. The lawyer

handed the statement over to police on October 1 and she spoke with them earlier this week.

"He has to stop, this has to stop," the former model told CBS News.

She hopes a link to the Epstein investigation will help bring Brunel down. "Maybe they'll finally listen to us and he'll finally be stopped," she said.

Jeffrey Epstein Case

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